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COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS

Letter dated 14 August 1997 from the representatives of Canada and the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

As you are aware, the Friends of Rapid Deployment have been examining various possibilities for enhancing the ability of the United Nations to deploy a peacekeeping operation rapidly. One of these is the improvement of United Nations logistics and, on behalf of the co-chairmen of the Group, we have the honour to provide you with a discussion paper on logistics prepared by a technical working group of the Friends.

Although progress has been made by the United Nations Secretariat in improving peacekeeping logistics support capabilities, the Friends consider that there is still a requirement to develop an overall logistics strategy that would integrate and strengthen current and future logistics initiatives. The attached discussion paper on logistics outlines such a strategy which, if implemented, we believe would significantly enhance the capability of the Organization to deploy, sustain and terminate a peacekeeping mission and, as a consequence, deal more effectively with crisis situations. Members of the Friends would be prepared to contribute expertise to assist in the further development of a logistics strategy.

* A/52/150 and Corr.1.

We should be grateful if you would have the attached text circulated to the Members of the General Assembly. Consideration of the discussion paper could, in our view, eventually be envisaged in the context of item 88 of the provisional agenda.

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(Signed) David KARSGAARD
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ANNEX

Discussion paper on logistics

1. The success of United Nations peacekeeping operations is dependent on the process of establishing and implementing cooperative arrangements between the civilian and military components of national and international organizations. The ability of the United Nations to react in a timely, efficient and effective manner, often at short notice, underpins the need for an integrated operational concept from which subsequent strategies can be developed and implemented. Among these, a logistics strategy must be based upon and integrated with the operational concept from the initial stage of mission planning. This requirement was recognized by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations in its recently concluded session when it urged the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to develop a coherent strategy for logistics support of peacekeeping operations.

2. It is acknowledged that the Secretariat has been undertaking some initiatives to improve United Nations peacekeeping logistics support capabilities; however, it is believed that these efforts would be significantly enhanced if the work of the Secretariat logistics staff were guided by an overall logistics strategy focused on planning, start-up, deployment, sustainment and termination of peacekeeping operations. The reflections and recommendations contained in the present paper are therefore intended to supplement and further enhance the logistics initiatives under development.

Strategy

3. The existence of an integrated logistics strategy will allow for the development and implementation of cooperative logistics support arrangements, policies, systems and procedures which are sufficiently flexible in order to meet the differing needs of missions and nations. Such a strategy should incorporate Member States' and the United Nations logistics resources into coherent and efficient support for peacekeeping. To achieve this goal, a number of the policies and procedures currently in place would require modification, and in some cases, further development. This would apply specifically to the areas of integrated planning, command and control, standby arrangements, procurement and financial and material management. The key elements which we believe are required for the development of such a strategy are integrated planning and command, control and reporting.

Integrated planning

4. As political, operational and logistics factors all affect a peacekeeping mission, an integrated approach to planning and execution is required to ensure success. Such a planning process should be implemented within the Secretariat to develop a coherent and integrated strategy. Logistics planning must be based upon and integrated with operational planning from the initial stages and throughout all phases of a mission.

Command, control and reporting

5. The existence of an integrated planning concept provides an opportunity for more decentralized mission management through increased delegation of financial and logistics authority to field mission headquarters. Once a mission is authorized and provided with the necessary resources, delegation of authority for execution and management to the field mission level should be the norm, with coordination being achieved via the mission's integrated (civil and military) support staff. This would be made possible through the implementation of a comprehensive control and reporting system which would operate through all levels from United Nations Headquarters through field mission headquarters to contingents. The Secretariat in New York would exercise policy, oversight and supervisory functions to fulfil the Secretary-General's responsibilities for all United Nations-mandated operational and logistics activities.

Implementation requirements

6. In order to implement an integrated concept for logistics planning and management, a number of procedural adjustments and requirements within the Secretariat and within field missions will be necessary. The key elements of this include:

- A concept of integrated planning and

- A command, control and reporting system which allows for increased delegation of authority and efficient coordination at all levels of mission management

which should be developed and implemented as a matter of priority as they underpin the most essential aspects of a coherent strategy for logistics support of future peacekeeping operations. A list or requirements related to logistics is outlined in the appendix.

APPENDIX

Summary of logistics requirements

1. Policy. Integrated planning. A structured, integrated planning process should be promulgated in a planning manual to ensure that the process is followed by all concerned. The process, commencing with the initial survey mission, must coordinate the work of the Planning Division and the Field Administration and Logistics Division as well as with other units of the Secretariat, coordinated by a single project manager. Logistics planning must be derived from the operational concept, and integrated with operational planning from the initial stages and throughout all phases of the mission, including drawdown. Once a new mission is established, planning for later phases must be coordinated with the field mission headquarters.

Requirements:

- Institutionalization of an integrated planning capacity under a single coordinating authority within the organizational structure of the Secretariat, comprising all necessary planning functions;

- Implementation of a process which sets goals, defines a planning sequence and responsibilities, assesses results and integrates operational and logistics planning activities;

- Promulgation of planning and support manuals (i.e., Survey Mission Handbook, Operational Support Manual, Contingent-owned Equipment Manual, Commander's Logistics Manual, Medical Support Manual, etc.) detailing the doctrine, procedures and logistics planning factors required to implement an integrated planning process encompassing all applicable organizations within the United Nations Secretariat.

2. Policy. Command, control and reporting. At the Secretariat level in New York (strategic level), a proper control and reporting system should be developed and maintained. The reporting system should allow for a sequential and comprehensive reporting cycle which can be utilized at the field mission level, and Secretariat level and to Member States. The system should create the best possible transparency of mission management. Support must be provided to all contingents on a uniform and equitable basis. It is necessary, particularly in larger or more complex missions, to coordinate the efforts of the field mission headquarters civilian and military logistics staff through the formation of an integrated support staff.

Requirements:

- Delegation of increased responsibility and authority for financial, administrative, procurement and other logistics functions to the field mission level;

- Revision of the United Nations logistics reporting system to reflect the increased delegation of authority and development of the integrated support service;

- Further development of the integrated support service concept to enhance joint operational control of the mission logistics support system.

3. Policy. Standby arrangements. A key requirement of the system is to have committed to the system sufficient resources both to facilitate timely strategic deployment of contingents to mission areas and to logistically sustain forces until such time as the United Nations is able to establish its own support capacity for subsequent phases of the mission.

Requirements:

- Confirmation of additional commitments from troop contributors or other nations for strategic air and sealift resources;

- Confirmation of commitments from nations for currently lacking mission-level logistics capabilities, i.e., multi-role logistics support units, engineering, medical, communications, mine clearing and utility transport aircraft;

- Completion of planning data for committed units/capabilities, i.e., volumetrics, standby arrangements planning data sheets, etc.

4. Policy. Financial. Fundamental prerequisites for efficient logistics support are budget forecasting and start-up funding for the initial phase of a new mission. The financial implications of a new mission must be accurately estimated during the early planning phase and follow-on requirements must be identified. As a mission becomes established, reimbursement arrangements assume greater importance for troop contributors.

Requirements:

- Development of streamlined procedures for mission start-up funding and mission budget follow-on planning;

- Continuation of the development of the peacekeeping database;

- Continued implementation of the Contingent-owned Equipment reimbursement and control system.

5. Policy. Procurement. The United Nations does not and should not maintain an extensive permanent logistics infrastructure or stockpile a complete inventory; therefore, a significant amount of matériel and services must be procured to support a new mission. The United Nations must therefore develop a procurement system that provides for timely and efficient acquisition in support of field missions.

Requirements:

- Completion of procurement systems contracts for matériel and services required to support field missions, i.e., strategic sea/airlift, bulk fuel, rations, spares for United Nations-owned equipment, and support services;

- Expansion and more efficient use of the United Nations procurement bidders' list.

6. Policy. Matériel management. The field missions of the 1990s have become more complex, resulting in requirements for support of a wider variety of more technically complex matériel. Various United Nations reports have identified significant loss and wastage of matériel resulting from deficiencies of the existing system. A significant amount of matériel could have been economically moved, refurbished and reused in other field missions if the matériel management system had been capable of coordinating the necessary arrangements. It has been widely recognized that there is a need to develop a more sophisticated, efficient and accountable system for managing United Nations-owned matériel.

Requirements:

- Establishment of an improved matériel management system capable of asset visibility and accountability;

- Preparation and maintenance of mission start-up kits.

7. Policy. Training. Troop-contributing nations must provide troop contingents capable of a degree of initial logistics self-sufficiency and equally capable of integrating with mission logistics support arrangements. One current drawback on the part of some nations is a lack of knowledge of United Nations logistics doctrine and procedures.

Requirements:

- Development of guidelines on logistics training for troop contributors;

- preparation of logistics training standards and guidelines for troop contributors;

- Promulgation of training manuals to support national logistics training.